

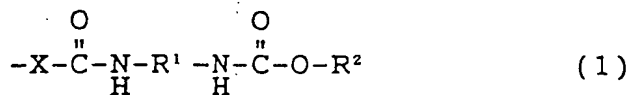
Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A ~~high-purity~~purified product of a polysaccharide containing a hydrophobic group which containshaving a content of at least 80% by weight of the polysaccharide containing the hydrophobic group, wherein the polysaccharide ~~is one having~~has a group represented by either -XH in which X is an oxygen atom or a nitrogen-containing group represented by NY with Y being a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbyl of 1-10 carbon atoms wherein 0.1-10 -XH groups per 100 monosaccharide units constituting the polysaccharide are replaced by one or more hydrophobic groups represented by the formula (1), namely,



in which X is the same as given above, R¹ denotes a hydrocarbyl having 1-50 carbon atoms and R² denotes a hydrocarbon group of 12-50 carbon atoms or a steryl group,

the content of an impurity product, in which both of the NCO groups in the diisocyanate are reacted with the hydroxyl group-containing hydrocarbon having 12-50 carbon atoms or with the sterol, being no greater than 0.05% by weight,

the ~~said~~ polysaccharide containing the hydrophobic group being obtained by a process comprising

a first process step of producing an isocyanate group-containing hydrophobic compound, wherein one mole of a hydroxyl group-containing hydrocarbon having 12-50 carbon atoms or of a sterol is reacted with a diisocyanate

represented by $\text{OCN-R}^1\text{-NCO}$ in which R^1 is a hydrocarbyl of 1-50 carbon atoms,

a second process step of producing the polysaccharide containing the hydrophobic group composed of the hydrocarbon group of 12-50 carbon atoms or of the steryl group, wherein the isocyanate group-containing hydrophobic compound obtained in the first process step is reacted with one or more polysaccharide, and

purifying the reaction product from the second process step using a solvent based on a ketone.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~high purity~~purified product ~~of polysaccharide containing hydrophobic groups~~ as claimed in claim 19, wherein the polysaccharide is selected from the group consisting of pullulan, amylopectin, amylose, dextran, hydroxyethyl cellulose, hydroxyethyl dextran, mannan, levan, inulin, chitin, chitosan, xyloglucan and water-soluble cellulose.

21. (Currently Amended) The ~~high purity~~purified product ~~of polysaccharide containing hydrophobic groups~~ as claimed in claim 19 ~~or 20~~, wherein R^2 in the formula (1) is steryl.

22. (Currently Amended) The ~~high purity~~purified product ~~of polysaccharide containing hydrophobic groups~~ as claimed in ~~any one of claims 19 to 21~~claim 19, wherein the content of unsubstituted polysaccharide is ~~as low as~~ no more than 20% by weight ~~or less~~.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) The ~~high purity~~purified product ~~of polysaccharide containing hydrophobic group as claimed in any one of claims 19 to 23~~of claim 19, wherein the product purified using the solvent based on a ketone is subjected to a further purification by dispersing the product ~~finl~~in water

under an ultrasonic treatment, with subsequent ultracentrifugal separation.

25. (Currently Amended) The ~~high purity~~purified product ~~of polysaccharide containing hydrophobic group as claimed in any one of claims 19 to 23~~of claim 19, obtained by subjecting the product purified using the solvent based on a ketone to a further purification ~~procedures~~procedure comprising dissolving the product in an aprotic polar solvent, admixing water ~~to~~with the resulting solution to cause ~~the~~unsubstituted polysaccharide to be transferred to ~~the~~an aqueous phase and removing the aqueous phase separated by phase separation.